

"The following instance of maternal devotion given by Jeffreys supports our views of the case: 'Those [women] who have united themselves to our sailors have manifested a faithful and affectionate attachment, and are extremely jealous of a rival. This may be partially occasioned by their great dread of being abandoned by the sailors to the mercy of their native tribes, who never fail, on such occasions, to treat them with extreme severity. In some instances, their children, the offspring of their illicit intercourse with Europeans, are forcibly taken from them and thrown into the fire, where they are destroyed. An instance of this kind, in which, however, the child was saved by the affection and courage of its parent, happened within the author's knowledge. One of these women, who had been for many years attached to a sailor, one evening wandered from her sealing party with a young child at her breast, and accidentally falling in with a band of natives, was immediately attacked, her infant was snatched from her, and thrown into a large fire; this treatment inspired the woman with the most desperate courage: she rushed with the rapidity of lightning through the horde of barbarians, and in an instant plucked her child from the devouring element, and ran off with it into the woods, whither she was followed by the savages; but she contrived, aided by the shades of night, to conceal herself and her scorched infant behind the thick trunk of a fallen tree. Considerable search was made for her by the men, but finding it useless, they returned to their fire,

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round which they lay down and went to sleep. The poor woman, observing this, quietly left her hiding-place, and before morning reached the town of Launceston, a distance of about ten miles, where she once more found a [57] comfortable home at the residence of a gentleman of that place. The poor mother suffered greatly, as well from fatigue as from the fire through which she had rushed to save her infant, and the child itself was so much burnt, that an inflammation taking place, it shortly after departed this life' (Jeffreys, pp. 118-124). "